

[Page One- side 1]

Madison, Wis.
July 30-97

Dear Jesse,-

I rec'd your lovely long letter Tuesday last, and was not at all surprised at its contents. I would have answered it immediately, but I was getting ready to come to Madison to attend the Assembly a couple of days, & thought I could better write after I got here when I wouldn't feel hurried.

I suppose you cannot help getting excited over the gold possibly to be found in Alaska. I have no doubt there is gold there, but certainly everybody cannot get rich, for as the Record says, all the best claims are now taken.

[Page One- side 2]

Of course, my dear Jesse, I don't want to discourage you from doing what you think is best, but many questions have to be answered, & if the answers when all made are more on the side of going to Alaska than not, I should go. In the first place, you have not been used to hard physical labor. Your constitution doesn't seem fitted to hold out under a long strain of such work with the attendant privations and hardships. Then also have you money enough to stand the drain of so much time ~~w~~ if you should not find anything? I read besides that the last ship ~~on~~ that connects with the vessels on the Yukon has sailed. One man

[Second Page- side 1]

sold his ticket that cost \$150 to another for \$1500, so he made something without any exertion. Of course our father made money by mining, but see how much more able to mine he was than you are having been a blacksmith, but after all he was too trusting in human nature to be able to retain it, losing, you remember , \$4000 of dust in one night by some one stealing it.

Then again, & this is no trivial matter, you & I are the only ones left, & I hate to think of such a thing as your going way off there where I could hear from you only at long intervals & not knowing whether you were dead

[Second Page- side 2]

or alive. I wouldn't be content a moment when I didn't hear from you. But as I said, you may do just as you think best. No person ought to take upon himself the awful responsibility of deciding another one's fate for him, & so I say again, if you feel that you are able to stand the strain to your purse & body required to engage in digging gold, go try your luck if you think best. You always have been lucky, and perhaps you might be so again. But that is mere conjecture. Then you might be entirely broken in health on coming back & be

[Third Page- side 1]

-2-

good for absolutely nothing. Of course if I got to feeling miserable, I should do something for it immediately whether in Washington or Alaska. Well, we will let the matter drop & let you decide what to do. I want you to do what is for your best good, when once you have decided what that is. It is a question not easily answered, but which ever way you do answer it, I hope you ~~l~~ will have the best of success. I inclose a slip I cut out this a.m. & shows the hard part of the gold struggle.

Mr. Oestreich didn't get the school notwithstanding all the recommendations

[Third Page- side 2]

of Prof's & friends & a personal visit there. He has formed other plans however for next year, which I am not as yet authorized to make known. He has lots of ambition and I doubt not will succeed in anything he undertakes.

Grace Green & Fred Ball, & Stella Bennett & Geo. King of Jamesville are engaged. She (Grace) is in town & I shall go over & see her tomorrow.

Alice Wise has another girl baby.

Did you get my letter asking about why my money doesn't show up? I wish you would or could hustle matters some; for I am anxious about

[Fourth Page-side 1]

it.

Aunt Dorcas wrote me the most insulting letter than any human could write another. It made me feel bad all over. She accuses me of "stealing my dead mother's clothes", & lots of other things. "No wonder Jay didn't want to marry you" etc. Such lies! It made me boil all over. However, I shall put coals of fire on her head in my next letter to her, & then I shall wash my hands of them. She says I haven't a relative who would now take me in. Any one will "take me in" if paid for it. I hope I shall never have to beg for shelter. I

[Fourth Page-side 2]

would die first.

Attending Assembly two days & enjoyed it immensely. Yesterday Mr. Ehlman & two ladies went over in the same boat as I & one & Mr. O- went back at noon & the other stayed with me so I had company. We came home after the concert in the evening After a most enjoyable day. Saw lots of folks I knew. Mrs. Maud Ballington Booth spoke on Prisoners, the people's attitude toward them. She has only worked a year in the prisons, but has done a grand things for the men, & she speaks to the outside world, imploring ~~them~~ it to not receive ex-convicts with distrust, but to put com

[END no additional Pages]